

EDITORIAL

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THANKSGIVING.

THANKSGIVING DAY will be considered from a somewhat different viewpoint this year than in the past. Material prosperity has heretofore been a governing thought, a measure of happiness, and if this was gratifying a more or less indifferent thanksgiving was forthcoming, in which self received most, if not all consideration; financial gain, aggrandizement, subsistence, dress and pleasures have entered too largely into the thoughts of men and women.

The present cataclysm has even now required money and means in heretofore unheard-of amounts, and we fumble in vain through our vocabulary for superlative expressions that will convey a shadow of the meaning. More than this, millions have already given their all for the cause, and now our young men must participate in this sacrifice to make the world better, to prevent the possibilities of a re-enactment of such an appalling tragedy. Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered that many cannot see why there should be thanksgiving, and still this world experience may have in it the propulsion of general good that will yield its benefits to humanity for centuries to come.

Computations of the cost of the war are being made while other minds are calculating the gain to the world in the acquisition of higher ideals, a firmer grasp on the doctrine of the brotherhood of man. A catastrophe works upon the hearts of men in somewhat the same way that earthquakes do in nature, which dash the mountains into fragments but expose the seams of gold. We have been indifferent and supercilious, we have been content in our ambitions and boastful of our achievements and resources, but we are beginning to recognize an interrelation among nations, within our own people, a dependency that links the humblest citizen to the highest in authority, and if the lessons of the war will establish higher ideals, develop a new and broader vision then, even though our faces are turned with sadness toward Europe, and the distress of war is felt at home, we can be thankful and hopeful for being part of a better citizenship and nation with a truer perspective and a knowledge that man is greater than his material possessions, that cultivation of the conquest of self is an essential for victory without spoils.

The world is thankful that physicians and surgeons have been able to improve the methods of medical treatment and extend the possibilities of surgery; under the exigencies of war the medical, surgical and sanitary sciences are taking their longest strides. Just as the armies are being kept in health, so will the civilians receive the benefits of the improved methods and new discoveries. It is true that hoped-for opportunities have so far not been given to pharmacists

in this country, but there is a progressive tendency toward a better recognition. France has acknowledged the importance of military pharmacy, and an able paper on the subject, by George M. Beringer, will be found in this issue. England has taken a step forward by conferring rank on pharmacists engaged abroad and, it is safe to say, when our Army officers are brought in touch with the French military organization, endorsement will be given to the establishment of pharmaceutical corps in the U. S. Army.

The American Pharmaceutical Association, through the means afforded by the income from the National Formulary, has established a research fund, which is bound to be of value to pharmacy and medicine. President Frederick J. Wulling, in his annual address, proposed a federation of the drug and pharmaceutical interests, whereby they may coöperate, if the plan is put into effect. Both of these propositions testify to the sincere purpose of extending the usefulness of pharmacy. Pharmaceutical research should be left to pharmacists, and more intensive coöperation on their part is essential thereto and for the advancement of pharmacy. Let us be thankful that we can participate in the service for pharmacy.

It is no difficult matter to find cause for complaint, but the trade and profession have handled the trying situation with relatively little inconvenience or diminished profits notwithstanding that many druggists and pharmacists cannot comprehend that taxes on merchandise are intended to be passed on to the consumer. There are many who cannot be reached by any other kind of taxation and who would otherwise contribute nothing to the cause. So with all the trials and difficulties that druggists and pharmacists have had to contend with and will continue for an indefinite period, there is abundant reason for thanksgiving, not only for the comforts enjoyed but for the opportunities of service. E. G. E.

COÖPERATION BETWEEN PHARMACOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS.

THE address of Chairman A. W. Hewlett, M.D., of the Section on Pharmacology and Therapeutics of the American Medical Association, presents important points of interest to pharmacists and more particularly for those engaged in developing standards of biologic assays. The contribution evidences that a close coöperation should exist between pharmacists and practitioners of medicine, between teachers of the related branches in schools of medicine and of pharmacy, and that the establishment of a research fund in the American Pharmaceutical Association was a timely move.

In the last issue of the JOURNAL, papers on biologic assays were printed, relating not only to variation in standards but the effect of age on the activities of drugs and their preparations. In the article referred to, other problems are discussed which require the consideration of the pharmacist and the medical

practitioner; the author discusses these in the presentation of the following questions:

1. Are the effects observed produced by doses that can safely and easily be administered to patients?
2. Will the human organism react in the same manner as the animal studied?
3. How is this reaction modified by disease?

In the comments made, the thoughts of Doctor Hewlett are largely employed, even to the extent of using his language without further credit. The following disclose some of the influential factors in therapeutic advance.

"Modes of treatment frequently form the starting point of scientific studies, and the exact knowledge thus gained leads in turn to greater precision in treatment."

"Pharmacologic studies have uncovered new therapeutic possibilities that have ultimately proved useful in the clinic."

"A clear recognition of the fact that substances of similar chemical structure frequently possess pharmacologic properties that are similar but not identical has opened up a vast field of research."

There are factors, worthy of consideration, that may result in different conclusions. The pharmacologist obtains his data from laboratory experimentation; the practitioner of medicine must not infrequently resort to *materia medica* which may prove successful or not, the interpretation of the effects may be right or wrong, and this is reflected in therapeutic literature—the drug is pronounced efficient or inefficient according to the result, without studious analysis. In the laboratory the action of drugs is usually studied on normal animals, and toxic doses can be administered with impunity; in the clinic, therapeutic doses are used, and the effects may be modified by disease.

The question of dosage, both as to quantity and method of administration, is a matter of importance. The marked rise of arterial pressure produced by large doses strychnine injections induced its use by clinicians in conditions of low pressure, whereas it has been conclusively proven that the former was due to toxic effect. The reputation of digitalis for slowing the heart, in practice, is based on observations which were made on those suffering from auricular fibrillation. In the laboratory intravenous injections are employed, and only seldom in general practice. Different species of animals may respond differently to the action of drugs.

It is sufficient to have shown that coöperation between pharmacologists and practitioners of medicine is highly important and that on their coöperative work largely depends the progress of medicine. Pharmacy must do its part, and we are pleased that many of the papers of the Scientific Section were thoroughly in line with the coöperative movement, and also to repeat, that the establishment of the research fund by the American Pharmaceutical Association was timely and, that these opportunities will be promoted when laboratory facilities are provided by the Association.

E. G. E.

CONSERVATION.

CONSERVATION is one of the watchwords of the times, and is applicable for the prevention of many small wastes that occur in every drug store, as well as the larger application of frugality, whereby the opportunity is afforded to serve a greater number without the compelling necessity for more extended production.

In the October issue of the *JOURNAL*, p. 904, appears a contribution of the Section on Commercial Interests by Robert P. Fischelis, which is timely. Simply because manufacturers will take back biological products after the expiration date of the package is no justification for putting in an oversupply. The individual is apt to overlook the fact that there are 50,000 others who may also overstock, and create a waste, not only of the product itself but of the other parts of the package.

This ought to be a period of intensive coöperation, the manufacturers and the wholesalers should indicate to the retailers, not only where the latter can conserve time and expense for the former, but also point out economies of value. Every retailer realizes that there is a saving in portorage cost when all deliveries can be made to a certain section on one trip, and a similar application can be made to purchases of the retailers from the wholesalers. It is now time to study the delivery system closer; service is appreciated by customers, but often without concern of the cost to the dealer. If service is valuable then it should be worth a price. Other items of expense that are not properly taken care of by all are telephone service and stamp sales. If these are made use of for advertising purposes, then they should produce business, if not, then the service should be paid for.

There are, however, leaks that more directly concern the owner of the store, decrement, deterioration or destruction, which, if summed up, constitute a money value that would buy a Liberty Bond. The writer was in a drug store, a short time ago, where system was as near perfection as is possible; there were shelf containers for stock, that protected corks, prescription ware, paper, labels, etc., small items, but very important from the standpoint of cleanliness, order, conserving of time and preventing depreciation. The same thought applies to merchandise, in which there may not be a direct loss, but if this has gone out unsightly or imperfect, it will certainly have an effect on future sales.

The present is a time for examination of methods that have been conducive to waste: the higher cost of living can in a degree be offset by thriftiness that will induce greater efficiency. Put the resolutions to conserve and to cut out waste into practice. As Mr. Fischelis concludes his article on "Conserving Life by Eliminating Waste," "to do your bit means more than flying a flag over your store."

E. G. E.